

Service-Learning Infrastructure Development Initiative

STRATEGIC PLAN GUIDANCE 2007/08

APPENDIX A -STRATEGIC PLAN GUIDANCE

Since 2003, the community engagement¹ (also referred to as civic engagement) movement has taken hold and expanded the roles of service-learning offices in higher education throughout the nation. Recently, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning established a Community Engagement elective classification that offers institutions the opportunity to connect and document their ethos and efforts to community engagement in four key categories – 1) Institutional Identity and Culture; 2) Institutional Commitment; 3) Curricular Engagement; and 4) Outreach and Partnerships. Several CSU campuses are a part of the first round of applicants, and the Chancellor's Office believes that a number of other campuses are well-positioned to apply for future rounds. Additionally, in the CSU, we are seeing a wide array of signs that point to an expansion of service learning toward community engagement. For instance, some service-learning offices have changed their name, launched new efforts (e.g., economic development) and expanded their work with faculty to integrate engagement activities into teaching, research and service.

The CSU Chancellor's Office recognizes the expansion of this work and has committed to developing a new community engagement agenda. It is expected that there will be emphasis on community engagement in the new CSU-wide strategic planning initiative, and the Office of Community Service Learning will also be going through a complementary and connected planning process.

The Office of Community Service Learning in the Chancellor's Office values having a clear understanding of how our collective visions, goals and strategies connect with and diverge from one another. Therefore, we are asking all service-learning offices to conduct their own strategic planning process.

If you have undergone a strategic planning process within the past two years and have a current plan that is current through 2008, this stage is not required. Instead, the initiative leader is asked to identify the top two to three implementation efforts for the coming year.

¹ There are several definitions for community engagement, and each campus has its own prerogative to develop a contextual definition that represents the culture of the campus and community. The Chancellor's Office is using a definition from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and Learning – "Community Engagement describes the collaboration between higher education institutions and their larger communities (local, regional/state, national, global) for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources in a context of partnership and reciprocity."

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The Chancellor's Office is invested in the final product that your office will create, however, we also place high value on creating an intentional process that helps build relationships and partnerships among the participants. Below are some strategic planning principles that we hope you will practice.

- An intentional and extended design process that provides adequate time for reflection and for following up on ideas and next steps that emerge from the various conversations.
- A range of feedback from a diverse set of community and campus stakeholders that include your usual partners, some newer voices and perhaps those who have not always been enthusiastic champions for your office. One possible mode is a three-tier approach:

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- 1) **Strategic Planning Design Team** – A working group of people who will be responsible for crafting the process, compiling notes from meetings, preparing a draft strategic plan based on the various conversations and adjusting the process as necessary. This core group may range from four to five people, and include a student, a community partner and a faculty member in addition to staff from the service-learning office. This team will not necessarily make final decisions on what goes in the plan.
 - 2) **A broader group** who has worked with the service-learning office on policies, projects and other efforts. This group of individuals will consistently participate in ongoing conversations. You may want to include people in this group who have not always been supportive of the office. It is recommended this group also be reflective of the diverse stakeholders in the work of your office.
 - 3) **Other individuals** who play an important role on campus and in the community. Your president, deans of colleges and community members are some of the possibilities. These people will provide input on a limited basis and may participate in some of the large group or subcommittee conversations.
- A clear, agreed-upon decision-making process. Those involved in the process will need to discuss how decisions will be made and who will make those decisions.
 - A well-thought-out plan for ways to communicate to those who played different roles in the process about the progress of the plan as well as ideas for how to monitor and evaluate the success of the plan.

FORMAT

The Chancellor's Office is interested in a basic format for the strategic plan, and your office is welcome to add other elements. The strategic plan should reflect a mission statement and priorities for at least the next two years, but no more than five years, for the service-learning office.

- **Vision Statement** can include identification of values and guiding principles.
- **Core Goals** for the service-learning office. *Each office should be able to consider and articulate its role in supporting a broader engagement agenda.*
- **Short-term and long-term strategies** for realizing the vision and core goals of the office. With each strategy, you will want to indicate a timeframe (to be accomplished in the first six months, Year 2, etc.)
- **Leadership** – Who will be responsible for moving forward these goals and strategies?
- **Integration to Campus Priorities**
 - As part of the strategic planning process, there should be discussion with key leaders to learn about their priorities for the campus and how service learning and civic engagement efforts could play a role in fulfilling those priorities. The campus president, provost, vice president for student affairs, student leaders and chair of academic senate are some possible leaders.
 - After the discussion, the strategic planning design team, or the broader group, should discuss how the vision and goals for the service-learning office overlap with campus priorities. Are there ways to bolster this connection?
- **Integration to Community Priorities** - How is the new strategic plan responsive to community priorities, current issues and strengths?

ASSESSMENT OF INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS

In conjunction with the strategic planning process, all service-learning offices will conduct an assessment of current and emerging infrastructure needs (staffing, office space, etc.) by addressing the following questions:

- What is the current office staff and budget?
- If the office does not yet have a full-time equivalent director, is a full-time equivalent director warranted? If so, what steps can be taken to ensure adequate staffing needs?
- Are there adequate resources to accomplish the vision, goals and strategies of the new strategic plan?
- Does the office receive a fair balance of resources between university, external and the Chancellor's Office? Explain.
 - If the office is primarily supported by external and Chancellor's Office resources, what incremental steps will be taken over a two- to three-year period to ensure that some of this support is shifted to the campus?
- Is a transition plan in place if the current director leaves his/her position?

PROVOST AND/OR VICE PRESIDENT OF STUDENT AFFAIRS INVOLVEMENT

The strategic plan and assessment should be signed off by either the provost (vice president for academic affairs) or the vice president for student affairs, whichever division the office is located in. The Office of Community Service Learning in the Chancellor's Office will compile campus results from both products and share the trends and ideas with CSU campuses and a national audience. If the service-learning program is a shared partnership between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs, then both division leaders should sign off on the documents.